

Board Agenda Item
October 26, 2005

PRESENTATION – 1

Donation from Van Metre Company to the Bright Futures Campaign

Roy Barnett, Group President for Planning and Design, and Larry Bensignor, Trustee of Van Metre Companies, will present a check to the Fairfax County Park Foundation on behalf of the Bright Futures campaign.

ENCLOSED DOCUMENT:

None

STAFF:

Michael A. Kane, Director

Timothy K. White, Deputy Director

Robert Brennan, Executive Director, Park Foundation

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PRESENTATION – 2

Agency Accreditation

Don Cochran, recently retired Operations Director for the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, will present an overview on agency accreditation.

ENCLOSED DOCUMENT:

None

STAFF:

Michael A. Kane, Director

Timothy K. White, Deputy Director

Elisa Lueck, Manager, Strategic Initiatives and Policy Development

ADMINISTRATIVE - 1

Adoption of Minutes – September 28 and October 12, 2005 Park Authority Board Meetings

ISSUE:

Approval of the minutes of the September 28 and October 12, 2005 Park Authority Board meetings.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Park Authority Director recommends approval of the minutes of the September 28 and October 12, 2005 Park Authority Board meetings.

TIMING:

Board action is requested on October 26, 2005.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None

ENCLOSED Documents:

Attachment 1: Minutes of the September 28 and October 12, 2005 Park Authority Board meetings

STAFF:

Michael A. Kane, Director
Timothy K. White, Deputy Director
Nancy L. Brumit, Administrative Assistant

DISCUSSION - 1

Construction of Donated Structures/facilities on Park Land

At the October 5, 2005 meeting of the Planning and Development Committee, staff was asked to provide suggested criteria for the development of a policy which would address the construction of donated structure/facilities on park land.

Potential Policy Language - For Discussion:

The acceptance of donated facilities/structures proposed for construction on park land requiring master plan approval shall be limited to those facilities/structures appearing on existing master plans.

For facilities/structures not requiring master plan approval, the following criteria will apply:

- The facilities/structures must be similar to existing facilities typically provided by the agency and shall be required to meet existing Park Authority design standards.
- The facilities/structures shall not be for the recognition of affiliations, whether cultural, religious, fraternal, individual, organizational or other, except as permitted by other Park Authority Policy.
- The facilities/structures shall not be of a religious, political or theological nature.

Current Policy and Planning Implications:

- Current policies regarding the construction of donated structures/facilities extend only to those granted by Policy 402.2 Adopt-A-Field Storage Facilities on Park. This policy provides for the placement of maintenance structures by participants in the Full Adoption Program. Basic design specifications for these facilities are provided by the Park Authority.
- There are no current policies governing proposals by groups or individuals to develop new structures on park land for the purpose of ceremony or individual, cultural, family or organizational recognition. Current policies do exist for the naming of facilities.

- While Park Authority policies do not prevent the introduction of facilities or structures of this type, they are equally silent on permitting such structures.
- Large facilities/structures would require a 2232 or master plan revision if they were perceived as not being substantially in accord with the general character, location or extent of the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan.
- In many cases the re-opening of a master plan could have far reaching consequences and impact existing structures/facilities. (Some existing conditions are “grandfathered” until the master plan is revised).

Associated Issues:

- Donated signs and plaques recognizing donors, individuals or groups have been placed in parks at various structures/facilities, but are limited in size and are amenities to the structure/facility, not structures/facilities in and of themselves.
- “Generic” structures/facilities such as playgrounds, benches, dog parks, lighting systems and athletic fields have been donated to the Park Authority, but are representative of similar and existing facilities typically provided by the agency. These are required to meet existing Park Authority design standards.
- The Park Authority may find difficulty in establishing criteria for approving or denying proposals for some donated structures/facilities. Decisions on appropriateness, attractiveness and usefulness could be difficult determinants to define or defend.
- The Park Authority must be consistent in its policy application and in doing so must consider all “what if” scenarios.

Considerations:

- The donation of new facilities/structures on parkland could be used to provide unfunded, master planned facilities/structures.
- Certain structures/facilities can, by themselves, have value as “attractions”, but also contribute to the attendance, enjoyment and use of the park in which they reside.
- Certain structures/facilities, even those whose nature is only symbolic, can contribute to a park’s interest, character or aesthetics.

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- The expression or recognition of affiliation, (cultural, religious, organizational), could build community relations and embrace segments of the community that would otherwise not be engaged with the park system.
- Space within parks is a precious commodity. Consideration should be given to the over-all benefit a structure/facility would have to the entire community, compared to other uses of the land, including green space.
- The cultural diversity and far reaching prevalence of community organizations, religious groups, professional organizations, commercial establishments, clubs (including scouts and athletics) and other affiliations must be considered as potential donor sources for new facilities/structures on park land.
- Structures/facilities proposed by some groups may not be representative of the entire community, club, religion, organization or culture. Therefore, numerous, similar facilities could be requested throughout the park system.
- Facilities proposed by some groups may represent only a local branch, chapter, etc. of a particular club, organization or culture. Therefore, numerous, similar facilities could be requested throughout the park system.
- The placement of facilities/structures on park land considered to have a religious significance could result in criticism and be the subject of legal action.
- Some facilities/structures may not be considered "useable" by all segments of the population because of differences in culture, religion or affiliation.
- The development of any park facility/structure draws the attention of environmentalists and conservationists who could question whether the use of park land for these purposes is consistent with the Park Authority mission.
- The continued maintenance and eventual replacement of any facility/structure must be considered when accepting any donation of a structure or facility.

STAFF:

Michael A. Kane, Director

Timothy K. White, Deputy Director

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INFORMATION - 1

Park Authority Board Meeting Schedule - January to December 2006

Unless otherwise directed by the Park Authority Board, the following dates will be published as the regular meeting schedule for 2006.

January	11 and 25
February	8 and 22
March	8 and 22
April	12 and 26
May	10 and 24
June	14 and 28
July	12 and 26
August	Recess
September	13 and 27
October	11 and 25
November	8*
December	13*

*The second meeting in November and December 2006 could be reinstated if necessary.

ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS:
None

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STAFF:

Michael A. Kane, Acting Director

Timothy K. White, Deputy Director

Nancy L. Brumit, Administrative Assistant